1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Today the empire of Bornu is a Muslim emirate, or kingdom, which forms a subdivision of Bornu Province in the northeastern corner of Nigeria. The emirate covers an area of 24,000 square miles and, according to the 1952 census, has a population of about 1 million people of whom 626,000 are Kanuri—the dominant ethnic group of the kingdom. There are also about 160,000 Fulani and Shuwa who tend their cattle in the area and who carry out a semi-nomadic way of life. Another 225,000 people belong to small pagan groups, from south of the province and the Cameroons, as well as from the Hausa-speaking areas to the west and from the other regions of Nigeria. The emirate also includes about 5000 non-Nigerians, who are from Europe, America, the Near East, and other African countries.

Including the emirate, Bornu Province has approximately 1,600,000 people, 750,000 of whom are Kanuri. Thus many Kanuri live outside the political boundaries of the emirate. Indeed Kanuri can be found in all major cities of northern Nigeria in substantial numbers as well as in the neighboring territories of Chad and Niger. In order to identify the population with a particular territory, however, it is convenient to think of the emirate sub-division of Bornu Province as Bornu, the traditional homeland of the Kanuri kingdom. These are the people who are the subject of this book; they describe themselves as "Kanuri—the people of Bornu." As noted above, outside this entity—of Bornu—there are many other Kanuri, and a political entity, Bornu Province. However, these will be referred to by their full names, while the word "Bornu" will be reserved for the political system, whose present expression, the emirate or kingdom, is continuous with the Bornu of pre-colonial times. This reflects as well the attitude of the people themselves, who use the term "Bornu" to refer primarily to the emirate rather than the larger area of Bornu Province.

One other point should be kept in mind about the population figures. There has been a more recent Nigerian census since 1952, and although the details are unknown as yet, it is generally accepted that the more recent figures are in the neighborhood of thirty-five to forty-five percent higher than those of 1952. This means that Bornu may actually have nearly 900,000 in population, and Bornu Province may reach as high as two million persons, as of 1966.

The Kanuri of Bornu live spread out over the entire area of the emirate, in 306 named and variously sized settlements, ranging from Maiduguri, the capital, with its 80,000 population, down to tiny hamlets of three or four households. Most of the people, about two-thirds of them, live in 248 named village units that range in size from 1000 to 5000. About one-quarter of the population, on the other hand, live in eleven cities whose population is 10,000 or over. This statistical information from the census masks an important point, however, for the towns and villages are really area units and each has within its territory, a set of satellite hamlets that often total to more than half the population of the town or village area. It is this pattern that gives to Bornu its "filled-up" quality even though the population density is approximately twenty-five to forty persons per square mile when calculated from the 1952 census figures or perhaps as much as forty to sixty persons per square mile on the basis of more recent counts. Riding out on horseback into the bush one never feels alone; here and there sprinkled in one or two mile intervals in all directions are little hamlets with their surrounding farmlands while more intermittently, perhaps every five or six miles, are the larger towns and villages. Ev-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Geidam in the north, where another anthropologist, Abraham Rosman, and his wife were working. Discussions with Dr. and Mrs. Rosman helped all of us to see many of the unique features of Kanuri life that stemmed from our particular towns as against more general Kanuri patterns of behavior that were widespread throughout the society. We also became acutely aware of the kinds of variations that could occur across communities as they varied in size, ethnic composition, and quality of the political leadership. At the end of the first field trip, my wife and I spent three months in the capital city of Maiduguri looking at government reports and district notebooks, and acquainting ourselves with many of the special activities that characterize courtly life at the center of the emirate.

In 1964 and again in 1965 I returned to Bornu. On my previous visit the country had been a colonial holding of Great Britain, now it was part of the independent nation of Nigeria. My task in this second visit was to gather statistics on marriage and on divorce rates. But it also gave me a chance to see old friends, and catch up on what had been happening locally since my last visit seven years earlier. Some changes were readily apparent. A large number of deep wells were sunk all over the province, and these now provide enough water for a greatly expanded livestock population. Everywhere the cattle are healthier, fatter, and above all much more in evidence. They block roads and are seen herded in large numbers to and fro wherever one wanders over the countryside. Furthermore the people are less afflicted by parasites because the deep water is uncontaminated, as much of it was not during my first visit. There is now a large modern abattoir and a ground-nut oil refinery in the capital city, and in late 1964 the Nigerian railway finally pushed through to Maiduguri to connect the Bornu capital with Nigeria's national railway system. On the other hand, detailed questions about various traditional practices indicated that there have been few changes at the cultural and social level. At the political level where there were English District Officers and other officials of the regional government, now these posts are filled by Nigerians, generally from other parts of northern Nigeria. However it is for the most part correct to use the present tense in describing Bornu, and when this is not true I will attempt to mention the special circumstances that have brought on the changes.

Magumeri, our home for seventeen months in 1956 and 1957, sits on top of one of the ridges of Bornu, and there is a steep climb onto it from the motor road that travels along the bottom of the ridge for most of the year. During the rains, the road runs along the sandy top of the ridge, to keep clear of the large muddy areas formed at the ridge bottom. Magumeri includes approximately 2000 people about half of whom live in surrounding hamlets within the boundaries of the village area. It is a district capital and thus has a two-room primary school, a court house, and the large compound of the district head who administers twenty-one village areas, containing 50,000 people, living in an area of approximately 850 square miles. The village has a weekly market on Sunday, and is divided up into a number of wards under the village area head who is also the political leader of its surrounding hamlets and officially the political subordinate of the district head. Except for the fact that it has a somewhat lower proportion of non-Kanuri compared to most others, Magumeri is a "typical" Bornu village in terms of its size, occupational ranges of the population, and influences it receives from the capital and the world beyond the emirate. Indeed this is why I chose to spend most of my time

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

5

The Economic Life

121 433 NO MATTER WHERE or who they are the members of every human society must have some means by which they obtain the material goods and services deemed valuable and important to their way of life. How these goods are produced, distributed, and consumed forms the basis of the economic system of any society. However, for our present purposes the details of production are beside the point, for they deal with the local technology rather than the economy in the sense that this economy is part of the social system. Therefore, I will restrict the present chapter to the various units of Kanuri economy and its interrelationships which provide the means by which economic life is successfully carried on in Bornu.

433 The Kanuri do not have factories to produce goods, there are only a few large trading companies, and there are even fewer large institutional consumers of goods and services such as hospitals, schools, factories, armed forces, hotels, and so on. The bulk of the people is spread out over the entire area of Bornu in small [162] towns and hamlets, and even in the few cities the basic economic facts of life for most of the households are very similar to those throughout the entire area. Villages and hamlets are only economic units to the extent that they have boundaries, and all the land is held by virtue of one's residence in a particular village or hamlet. However towns do not act corporately for most economic purposes. That is to say they do not buy and sell things as units, they do not organize the production of goods as units, nor do they organize the distribution of goods and services within [592] or between villages as units. The only level at which this is done consistently throughout the society is at the level of the household whose members do form themselves into a unit of production and consumption.

592 It is important to remember from Chapter 3 that a household is not the same thing as the family. Very high divorce and fairly high mobility of the household members in general means that the people living in a Kanuri household can and do change a great deal over time. The economic life of the household, however, may not have changed at all. Just as personnel turnover does not change the basic nature of a business firm in western society, so does it have little effect on the jobs to be done and how they are carried out in a Kanuri household.

[433] There are other units in the economy, and as we describe the major features

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ried he must decide where he will set up a house. There are three possible alternatives: (a) he can bring his wife into the house of his father or older brother, or patron whoever the superior man might be; (b) he can set up his own compound close by; or (c) he can move further away and become independent or subordinate to someone else. The decision depends upon whether or not the young man is benefiting from the previous relationship, in which case he usually stays in or near the original compound, or whether he believes himself to be suffering from it, in which case he moves or tries to move away, or near to someone more powerful, influential, and economically beneficent with whom he can associate. The decision is often a very complicated one because myriads of other factors enter into it. Thus if there is a large age discrepancy between a younger man and his older brother, and the father is dead, the younger one may feel that his older brother will never treat him as a man but always as a "young boy." Or if there are brothers and some are full (same mother, same father) while some are half (only one parent in common) then the half brothers are less close and are usually linked to different groups of people through their mothers. One young man told me confidentially that he was worried about whether his father would continue to be successful and whether he should not try to use some of his father's powerful connections in Bornu to become the client of a more important person whose position was even more impressive and more secure than that of his own parents. On the other hand many people would speak about leaving home and setting up households on their own or under influential men and never seem to get around to doing it. When asked about this they replied that this was their home, these were their relatives, and whether it was beneficial or not they ought to stay with their kinsfolk. For them blood is thicker than water, that is to say, they feel their roots in a kinship unit must be the eventual determinant of where they spend their lives.

It is these processes of household growth, and associations between households, that underlie the formation of small-scale political units in Kanuri society. The process can best be seen by observing a real life situation. About three miles southwest of Magumeri is the small hamlet of Gworongo (population circa 250–300) which falls within the boundaries of Magumeri village area. Surrounding the hamlet are small bramble-fenced plots of a special crop called *gworongo* which gives the hamlet its name. This plant is used by women as a stimulant and cosmetic along with tobacco flowers. In 1953 one of these farmers, a man named Aji, moved out of the hamlet and set up a compound near his plots of gworongo. He says he wished to be closer to his fields; others gossiped that he had quarreled with the hamlet head of Gworongo over taxes. With him moved his two wives, a younger brother, and the latter's wife, and two unmarried sons. One of these sons left about a year later to go and live in Maiduguri with his father's younger brother. The other son married in 1957 and brought his wife to live in the compound near his father. A stranger to Gworongo hamlet arrived in 1954 and cut a bush farm for himself about one mile to the north of the settlement. He had no wife at the time and asked Aji if he could build a hut near the new settlement and take his meals in Aji's compound. For this hospitality he helped Aji on the *gworongo* plots, prepared household fences, and sometimes gathered grass for Aji's horse. He has since married with both a loan and some gifts from Aji and is now a settled member of the new "community-in-the-becoming." He says that Aji is his *abba njima*, and he is a tada njima or client of the settlement head.

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361 The Kanuri are a sedentary, agricultural people, who live in villages and towns. The fields which they farm encircle their villages. They are never found living in dispersed homesteads. A basic division exists between Kanuri village life and Kanuri life in the towns and cities. This division corresponds to the classic distinctions between folk and urban polar extremes. Urban life was present in pre-contact Kanuri culture and consequently is well integrated into Kanuri culture. In fact, the Kanuri cities of the eighteenth century were unques-

tionably larger than anything found in Borno today. However, as in all pre-industrial societies, the bulk of the population is engaged in agriculture and lives in the many small villages dotting the plain.

One can never travel far in Borno without encountering a village. Major villages are linked to one another and to towns by laterite roads. Tiny villages are linked by a network of paths and tracks to one another. Surrounding each village are the fields farmed by each family. Farm land can be had by clearing the brush and making a plot ready for farming. Since this is so easily done, land and its inheritance are not important determinants of the social structure. In theory, all land belongs to Allah and is in the hands of the Shehu of Borno, the political and religious head of all Kanuri. The Shehu distributed large fiefs to Kanuri lords who gave the land to the village heads for distribution to individual villagers. In practice, any newcomer to a village has only to ask the village head for permission to farm and suitable land will be given to him which he must, of course, clear for planting. It naturally happens that those most recently arrived in a village will be given fields furthest from the houses, so that it is obvious that certain fields are more desirable than others. In a town of some size this becomes important. Distant fields may be up to three miles beyond the edge of town, and walking out and back each day to plant or to harvest is a demanding task. Farm land, however, is never bought and sold. In the city this

marriage contract, is a common Islamic feature. Sexual rights of the husband, as well as his responsibilities for the support of his wife, are supported by Islamic law. Lastly, Islam does not necessarily recognize marriage as a permanent arrangement; consequently divorce is simple and commonly resorted to. All of these practices, commonly associated with Islamic societies, are characteristic of Kanuri society and are well integrated in Kanuri custom concerning marriage and the family.

B. The Community

The population of Borno Emirate is just over a million people. About one-third live in towns with a population of more than 7,000 (see Table 1). Following Maiduguri, the capital, which has a total population of 83,327 including the outlying villages, but only 56,777 in the town proper, there are ten towns with populations exceeding 10,000. The average size of these ten towns is 13,879. There are 16 more towns in Borno Emirate with populations of between 7,000 and 10,000. These 26 towns, plus Maiduguri proper, account for 325,640 people, almost a third of the population.

Although there may be some question whether a town with a population of 10,000 may properly be called "urban," it is clear that on the folk-urban continuum, such towns are distinctly approaching the urban pole[1]. These towns have few or none of the

1. If Miner can call Timbuktu, with its population of 6,500, a "primitive city," then these are certainly towns, or "urban centers." see Horace Miner, The Primitive City of Timbuktu (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 52]

Table 1

The population of Borno Emirate, according to towns ranked as to size:

Town	District	Population
Maiduguri proper		56,777
Ngurd proper	Ngurd	21,796
Kumagunnam	Ngurd	18,034
Dlagge	Kanemba	15,436
Jajere	Fune	13,798
Tiltue	Magumeri	12,377
Chibuk	Marghi	12,139
Chebel	Auno	12,121
Ngetre	Gubio	11,930
Geidam	Geidam	11,032
Gonini	Gujba	10,124
	Total	138,786
Kaduri	Kondugu	9,736
Bitatigwe	Yusufari	9,643
Mafuhe	Auno	9,478
Kaltigel	Damaturu	8,878
Gelda Yerro	Magumeri	8,238
Mafuna	Fune	8,281
Dambelwe	Kaga	7,980
Tajiwa	Auno	7,903
Malmalari	Yusufari	7,722
Daura	Fune	7,673
Goyamari	Yusufari	7,263
Wadi	Geidam	7,225
Gazabura	Gubio	7,212
Gatafo	Nobber	7,063
Mintar	Mongunu	7,034
	Total	130,077
Total for 27 towns above:		325,640

[GEIDAM]

individual character; to an extra culture, many times the size of his single community.

The present study is, then, a community study, as must usually be the case in the study of complex societies. The community is the town of Geidam, where the author and his wife lived for one year, from the ending of the rains in 1956 until the rains ceased once again in 1957.

A. The geography and ecology of Geidam.

Geidam, with its population of 11,038 is one of the largest towns in Borno Province (see Table 1) and represents urban Kanuri culture. The people of the countryside between Geidam and Nguru, some 110 miles to the west, are predominantly Manga, a Kanuri sub-group speaking a Kanuri dialect which differs slightly from Kanuri proper. To the east, towards Damasak, are Mobber, another sub-group. In the town of Geidam, however, the townsfolk are Kanuri, and speak standard Kanuri. This is primarily because urban Kanuri in Geidam have more in common with urban Kanuri coming from other large towns and cities, and share more with them than they do with the farming peoples of the small villages surrounding Geidam.

Geographically, Geidam lies in the northernmost part of the province, in fact, the northernmost part of Nigeria, since the border separating Nigeria from the independent country of Niger is only twenty miles north. The land is a flat sandy plain with scrub vegetation which becomes increasingly more

m Geidam. The population to
e Kanuri (or Manga), but its
ves directly north. Geidam
ferred to as the Komadugu Yobe
means river in the Kanuri
ving stream that empties into
east of Geidam. Many streams
ome months after the rains and
however, is large enough to
Before the rains it is reduced
n width; after the rains the
n it may extend over half a
ravel from Geidam to Lake Chad
ot use the river for travel or
r, some twenty miles east of
zargamo, the ancient capital
e Fulani. Hence Geidam is not
Along the river, and still
further on, along the shores of Lake Chad, are numerous villages and towns.

The geographic location of Geidam, aside from the drier sandy nature of the land because of its northern location, is significant because of its situation in relation to Maiduguri, the provincial capital, and to Nguru, the rail-head. Maiduguri, in the center of the province (see Figure 2), is important both because it is the administrative and commercial capital and be-

632 563 167 turn to their northern villages. A group of Bouzou work at camel transport, and live in a cluster near the slaughter-slab area. Another group of Bouzou work as water-carriers and come [162] to live in Geidam between agricultural seasons. They all, up to thirty in number, live in the compound of Lowan Ashek.

632 621 Lastly a group of pagans are to be found in a small hamlet called Koldi, about 400 yards northwest of the town proper. [162] There are forty-five households in Koldi, with a total popula- [622] tion of 134. Koldi has its own Bulama, but Lowan Ashek serves [651] as the Lowan of Koldi and is responsible for tax collection 632 there. The people of Koldi are largely pagan (kərdi), and mem- 621 563 bers of the following tribes are found there: Banana, Kim, Ka- 177 bam, Ngizim, Kabalia, Mandara, Kotoko, Gwoza and Fulani. Most of these are tribes found east and south of the Shari River, whose people are pagan or partially Islamized. This is the shatter-belt area between the Empires of Bornu and those of [302] Mandara and Bagirmi. The women of Koldi all do their hair in the Kanuri manner, and the people of Koldi are strongly acculturated to the Kanuri. In fact many Kanuri are found living in [771] Koldi. They are characterized primarily by their lax attitude [273] towards Islam, and are considered pagan because they brew millet beer there. No beer is brewed in Geidam proper, so that Kanuri youths wishing to partake of the local brew are forced to slip [534] away unseen to Koldi. Drumming can constantly be heard in the 632 evenings from the direction of Koldi. The people of Koldi all 621 have farms of millet in the surrounding area, but in addition [243] [285] [463]

[GEIDAM]

44 439 563 [497] [494] living in Geidam. They are involved in a dried-meat industry, buying beef slaughtered in Geidam, where the price is low, and curing it there. Since the price of cattle shipped south is raised appreciably by rail costs from nearby Nguru to Lagos, it is cheaper to cure the meat in Geidam and ship the dried meat directly by truck to southern cities. Rail freight costs are so important that many Fulani herdsmen drive their herds to Kano, some three hundred miles away, to save the freight charges. 44 439 563 [494] This does not improve the quality of the beef. There is also a certain amount of regional trade in dried fish, since fish, too, are plentiful in Geidam. The dried fish trade extends to Lake Chad, where small communities of Ibos can be found whose livelihood comes from buying dried fish and shipping them south by truck.

D. Political Organization on the Communal Level.

63 Bornu Emirate, the largest part of Bornu Province, is itself divided into twenty-one districts, each with its Ajia. [162] Geidam is the largest district, with a population of 86,993, covering an area of 2500-3000 square miles. The Ajia of Geidam is Yerima Mustapha, and he resides in the town of Geidam, the largest town in the district and consequently its administrative center.

1. The hierarchy of offices in Geidam.

64 The Bornu Native Authority was theoretically and now is

[GEIDAM]

1. Religious specialists.

792 The prototype of the religious specialist is the Malam.
872 As noted earlier, anyone who has studied the Koran is referred
875 to as a Malam. There are only thirty or forty Malams in Gei-
[463] dam, however, who devote themselves solely to Koranic studies
[462] and to the traditional role of teachers of the young. These full-time Koranic Malams have pupils living with them in their compounds, many sent into Geidam from the small surrounding
[876] villages where there are no Malams. Others, children of Geidam residents, are sent each day to the Malam, where they are taught prayers and where they repeat in group chants sections
[297] of the Koran read to them by the Malam. Young pupils of a Malam
[735] are distinguished by their garb: they wear goatskins over one shoulder and carry a begging bowl. Every evening, after the evening meal, they appear on the streets begging for their Malam in the name of Allah.

792 The title of Gonyi is given to very learned Malams, who
[554] have learned the entire Koran by heart. There are very few
793 Gonyis in Geidam. In addition to the Malams and Gonyis, there are three religious specialists who occupy distinct statuses which are given recognition by the traditional political author-
[693] ities. These are: the Alkali, and the two Imams. The role of Alkali is concerned with law and political organization as well as with religious practice, and has already been discussed in
[192] connection with political organization. The role of Imam (the word Liman is used in Kanuri; from the Arabic al-imam) is solely a religious role, but it receives political recognition.

592 chibuna tend to be given to higher-status household heads.
597 The chibuna relationship is also found in the last miscellaneous category which includes a wife's chibuna in one household, and a chibuna of the household head's father plus that
592 man's wife in another household. Friends and friends' children, and finally a Malam, his wife and five students taken into the household as an act of charity, are also found in the miscellaneous category.

592 Most of the households in the sample contain individuals
565 who are not members of the nuclear family of the household
554 head. These make up his yal. The mean size of yal (Table
463 XIIb) varies widely from group to group. For five groups it is small (Koranic Malams, kabuna, craftsmen, talaka, low-status individuals), with approximately one additional person in each household. For three groups (aristocracy, canteen traders, NA Malams) the yal is fairly large with the highest mean (4.67 members of the yal) occurring among the canteen traders. Finally, the range in total size of household for each of the eight groups can be seen in the lower right-hand column of
[162] Table XIIb. The mean size of household for the group of canteen traders is 10.2, while the mean size of household for the group of talaka is 2.75. This range represents the difference between the nuclear family of Geidam talaka, who have but one wife and very few children, and the household of a wealthy trader, with several wives, children and a large yal.

Chapter I
The Setting

[1-1]

101 For at least a millenium the drama of empire has been played out in an immense area of Africa known as the western Sudan which lies at the southern fringe of the Sahara and stretches in a roughly east-west direction across the continent from the Atlantic to Lake Chad. [178] Borno is one of the oldest of these and has maintained itself as an [681] ongoing political unit from early times into the modern world. Today the empire is a Muslim Emirate included as a sub-division of Borno • 162 Province in the Chad basin of northeastern Nigeria. The Emirate has [131] an area of approximately 24,000 square miles and a population of [161] 1,005,000 (1952 census) of which 626,000 are Kanuri, and 156,000 are Fulani and Shuwa nomads.(1) The remaining 224,000 people include an unspecified number of small pagan groups in the south of the Emirate together with other Nigerians mostly from the Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba tribes. There are as well 5,000 non-Nigerians including Levantines, Europeans and Africans from other countries.

132 The Emirate lies within latitudes 11 to 13 N. and longitudes [131] 11 to 13½ S. and has a typical sub-Saharan savannah climate. There is a mean daily maximum temperature of 94° F. from March to June and a mean daily minimum of 66° F. from July to February. The rainfall varies from north to south, being somewhat heavier in the south. Mean rainfall figures in inches per month at Maiduguri for the last thirty-six years are as follows:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.01	-	.01	.25	1.59	2.56	6.81	8.80	4.23	.75	.01	-

(1) The Province as a whole has a population of 1,596,000 of which 753,000 are Kanuri. Thus over 80% of the present Kanuri population of the Province live within the boundaries of the Emirate.

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144 southern Nigerians. The comparatively high frequency of Rho (cDe) chromosome, characteristic of other African populations south of the Sahara, is also present among the Kanuri.(1)

361
162 The Kanuri are sedentary agriculturalists and live in various sized settlements scattered homogeneously throughout the Emirate. In their language they distinguish three kinds of settlements primarily on the basis of size. The largest category, birni (city) refers to centers of population containing 12,000 to 15,000 and over. Besides Maiguguri, the capital, there are only two or three other centers of such large proportion. Villages (bàla) form the most numerous category and vary in population from a few hundred to about ten thousand. The last category, hamlets (bàladea), contain from fifteen to twenty up to several hundred. For political purposes and the gathering of national census data hamlets are lumped in with villages and called village areas. This makes it difficult to tell from census data what proportion of the population of these village areas live in the village itself as compared with the number living in the surrounding hamlets within the boundaries of the village area. Village area tax rolls from one district (Magumeri) indicate that about one-half the population listed for any village area actually live in hamlets around the village included in its jurisdictional area.

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[361] At first sight the Bornu countryside appears to be quite thickly populated. When travelling through the bush on horseback or truck, settlements and their encircling farms follow one another after intervals of bushland with unending regularity. This first impression is misleading however for most of the area is uncultivated, unpopulated bushland and the population density is only forty to sixty per square mile. This conclusion

(1) Chalmers J.N.M. and others; THE ABO, MNS and Rh Blood Groups of the Nigerians, Eugenics (London) 17, 3, 168-176, 1953.

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103 The locality within the Emirate in which concentrated field work has been carried out is Magumeri situated about thirty-five miles northwest of Maiduguri on a motor road, Magumeri is the name of
• 162 both the district and its capital town. The area has a much higher
634 proportion of Kanuri than the Emirate in general. In Magumeri district ninety-six per cent of the population are Kanuri while this is true of only sixty-two per cent in the Emirate as a whole.

162 The district contains 52,000 people (1952) and has an area
634 of approximately four hundred square miles. Within its boundaries
632 there are sixteen village area units including the Magumeri village area. This village area has a population of 4,200 of which roughly 2,000 live in the village proper and 2,200 live in hamlets within the village area.

When compared to other rural district capitals in the Emirate, Magumeri village area is slightly smaller than the average. Excluding the two large cities of Nguru and Maiduguri, the population range for district capitals varies from 1,400 to 11,000, and the average is 5,100 persons. Seven district capitals are smaller and eleven are
[166] larger than Magumeri village area. It is reported by long term residents to have been a much larger village at one time but to have been losing population steadily over the past twenty years to Maiduguri.

361 Like all other Kanuri settlements, Magumeri is built in a
621 U shape around a central plaza (dandal) open at the west end with the house of the highest ranking person at the east end facing west. Lesser political leaders in the village have their own smaller plazas, again
366 with their houses at the east end facing west. Another feature common to all Kanuri settlements is the placing of the butcher's section at the southwest side of a town or market so that the prevailing winds from
088 the northeast carry the odour away. Like other district capitals,

595 iran to spouses living at that time in his compound. In addition he gives to his current wives presents of soap, perfume, clothes, etc. equal to about half the value of similar gifts given to the new bride. In practice this is extremely various, depending upon the wealth of the male, and his estimation of his present spouse(s)' potential jealousy and opposition over the new wife. One informant was observed who, after giving his wife a substantial cash gift (under half of the luwal-iran), matched the clothes given to his new bride one for one by gifts to his present wife. It is almost universally accepted that successive wives should be younger than one another. This is followed quite widely in practice, at least for the age difference between present wife (only one) and incoming wife. This insures that the authority and rank ordained by custom be represented by an age difference which always allows for a smoother operation of the principle that the wife already in the compound is kamu kura (senior wife).

595 632 162 [589] Frequency figures on polygyny from Magumeri town are atypical because of its position as District Headquarters. This means that a larger proportion of single males are present than is usual in rural areas, especially since Magumeri is one of the smaller District Headquarters, and the administrative personnel and their subordinates (these latter are often single young men) make up a larger element of [125] the population than is commonly the case. The following table on num-[361] ber of wives is taken from figures gathered between July and November of 1956,(1) given by 78 household heads in the towns of Magumeri, Chingowa, and Ngubura, which form a triangle to the south of Magumeri, each being

[595] (1) Therefore these data were collected before the harvest of the 1956 crop which brings on the marrying season. The respondents ranged across an extremely wide range of occupations, but all kept up a compound and all worked farms near their towns.

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five to six miles from the other. Magumeri and Ngubura are market towns on the main road to the urban center, while Chingowa has no large weekly market and is off the motor road except for a few months in the wet season when its higher position on a ridge places it on the route of the rainy season road.

Frequency Distribution of Wives Among 78 Male Household Heads

Number of wives	0	1	2	3	4		
Number of males	6	33	31	5	3	Total	78 males
Total number of females	0	33	62	15	12	"	122 females

Thus a total of 78 males had between them 122 women as wives or an average of 1.56 women per man (polygynous households in sample = 50.0%).

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Although it is probable in the extreme that many of the household heads questioned have since changed either the number and/or the persons of their wives, it is felt that this distribution is a representative and reliable description of Kanuri polygyny.

The quantitative data given gives strength to the qualitative observation that it is just as common to see a man with two wives as it [184] is with one in peasant households. This means that we may evaluate Kanuri polygyny as a well-integrated cultural element that is not only practiced by the wealthy and the powerful, but which has real meaning and behavioural consequences throughout all levels of the society.

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In the marriage relationship itself, cultural tradition directs that the male play the dominant role. He gives his wife (or wives) their market money weekly, their millet for cooking from his granaries, and among high status persons, he usually keeps them secluded as much as possible in his compound. He supposedly makes the major decisions concerning himself, his wife and children, and their

882 at least one non-agricultural occupation, even if it is just the marketing of agricultural commodities as is the case with surplus producers.

882 In summary then, adolescence (in the limited sense referred to above) sharply divides male and female roles. The female has
885 taken on her role as a married woman and it is within this status
562 that she completes the learning of skills necessary for her adult role in society. Her status attributes may shift and change during her mature life. She may become single again (most woman do), remarry, and bear children, but the framework of her adulthood is entered into at first virilocal marriage, at or before puberty. For the boy, adolescence is socially entered into at his circumcision and congeals psychologically after physiological puberty. He utilizes this period to learn the multitude of interpersonal and occupational skills which he requires as an adult, and a potential family head.

582 One of the interesting functional results of having an
[561] extra age status for males only is its artificial increase in the
[165] availability of women for marriage. If we consider for the sake of
[162] argument that the Kanuri life span is sixty years and the ratio of men to women is roughly one to one,(1) then with women marrying roughly around the age of ten to twelve and men marrying roughly around the age of twenty to twenty-two, women are marriageable for approximately fifty and men for forty years respectively. In other words, women would be of marriageable status one-fifth longer in time relative to men.(2)

(1) Bornu Census: 1951. Males: 790, 361. Females: 805, 347.
(2) If the life span is put at a smaller figure, as it probably ought to be to correspond with the facts, then this ratio would be larger because the length of adolescence is a constant.

582 = 162 This means that although the proportion of the sexes to one another is approximately equal numerically, there would be more women available for marriage than men if the society were not polygynous. It would be interesting to check cross-culturally whether or not in monogamous societies marriage is associated more with equal ages among mates at its first inception and whether or not polygyny is also associated most often with early female and late male first marriages.

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Maturity

885 The culture defines a mature man as rashidi. Ideally this connotes that he is married, is not immoderately adulterous, has a compound of his own, an occupation, the use of some land for farming, a recognized position in the community organization as the head of a compound in a ward, or hamlet, a degree of independence which includes the right to move to another community if he wishes, and if he has children, the label is even more applicable. Thus rashidi as a status implies the values which the culture places upon adult male life. It is therefore not only a description of a man's age status, but an evaluation of his accomplishments and behaviour as an adult male in relation to the value system of the culture.

[184] A few informants, notably higher ranking people, felt that a man should be over 30-35 years of age before he could be defined as rashidi. Most others were more inclined to disregard the age criteria and claim that any man who had been married was a rashidi.

[831] When a young man is divorced and has no other wives, or even if he is married but is known to be especially attentive to other women he is jokingly referred to as gairo (any person who has not been married,

829 things when they can be identified as Kanuri. If things get farther away from this Kanuri-ness they can be different from, worse than, or better than, the ideal Kanuri attribute. Thus a Fulani calabash is not good or bad, but it is not Kanuri — it is a different jili (i.e. variety). Facial features, on the other hand, either approach this ideal of Kanuri-ness, which is good, or differ widely from it, which is bad or ugly or not "the pure one" as one English-speaking informant declared. Customs, objects, morals, etiquette, dress, in fact the whole gamut of Kanuri-ness which is generally speaking evaluated as good. In some respects, for example, the Kanuri practice of asking for things continually from others or the widespread practice of adultery, this ideal Kanuri-ness is not the summum bonum. Nevertheless even when informants exclaim Kai Kanuri dibi dea (Wow! Kanuri are wicked) in response to some story of adultery or immorality in general, there seems to be a certain amount of pride expressed in this judgement because of the Kanuri flavour of the misdemeanor.(1)

177 The Bornu Emirate has throughout its long history always had contacts with other ethnic groups both within and beyond its borders. [162] Although the Kanuri are the majority group in Bornu, they are in constant contact with many other ethnic groups, especially in the larger centres. 162 563 Almost every town of over one thousand population has a pagan ward; slightly larger centres have a Hausa quarter, and often politically dependent (settled) Fulani or Shuwa hamlets nearby. Larger towns like Maiduguri, Nguru, Geidam, Dikwa or Damaturu have Ibo, Yoruba and sometimes European trading elements living in the town as well. Maiduguri, the

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(1) The Kanuri word dibi means bad, wicked, immoral in one sense. However, it can also be used as an expression of wonder, delight or amazement. For example, it could be elicited from a peasant on his first experience with a typewriter, or the insides of a camera.

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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capital, has, besides all these, a large Arab-speaking population from the Near East and the Sudan as well as the European Reservation for commercial and government personnel.

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In this situation of constant confrontation and to some extent interaction with other ethnic groups, evaluation of status by ethnic membership takes place. The Kanuri vary widely in their disposition to rank own-group as having the highest status among all the other peoples that they are in contact with or about whom they have any information. Almost universally Europeans are accorded high status (sometimes higher than own-group) as an ethnic group. This stems from their superior political and economic positions as administrators and traders. Thus, informants, unless they are well travelled or sophisticated city dwellers, are shocked and surprised to hear that there are prisons in England which house murderers, thieves and scoundrels, or that there are people in England who can be classed as labourers. In their eyes and experience, Englishmen have never been low status persons. Indeed one of the common expressions among the peasants is "Nasara Mai" (Europeans are kings). One informant, during a discussion of religious edicts on morality and the relation of these to the practicalities of everyday life, interjected a surprising comment on the relation of morality to life. He claimed that the only true Muslims in the world were Englishmen, since they were the only people who ever told the truth.

The Arabas (i.e. Arabic speakers, with the exception of the Shuwa nomads) like the Europeans, have very little but formal social con-

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tacts with the Kanuri and are highly rated as an ethnic group. The Arab facial features and skin colour are the models for what is the most attractive and pleasing (therefore the ideal Kanuri) physical types. The

556 the range of statuses he associated most closely with his own life.(1)
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829 The differing life experiences of large segments of the population bring about common ranges of experience for the whole segment. Thus rural peasants form one large massive segment which can be called a class.

565 A large number of people in the city feel themselves to be
369 a part of this lower class segment, the tala or peasants. Certainly the common poverty among them keeps them all within one category of economic
[166] activity (materially); however, other factors are involved. A large portion of the city population are extremely recent arrivals in the urban
[103] centres. Bornu cities, of which Maiduguri (or Yerwa as it is called in Bornu) is the largest, have grown enormously in the past few decades. This means that most of the people in urban centres are of recent rural origin and thus still retain many of the sentiments of their background.(2) This is not meant to contradict the discussion above on the rural/urban. However, it should be remembered that the distinction is extremely var-
[241] ious and very recent for many people. Another unifying factor is the maintenance of rural farms by city people, who move out, or send out a son or a servant, to cultivate a farm in the bush during the growing season, thus retaining their contact with the rural areas. One of the other

(1) Differing ranges of experience and personal aspirations may cause an expansion of the scale which people refer to. Thus one very ambitious young trader, from a peasant background, who still lived in the bush but was contemplating a move to the city, told the writer immediately, when asked, that Alhassin Dan Tata of Kano (one of the richest men in Nigeria) was a rich man. Nevertheless, lower class bush people generally used a frame of reference more nearly similar to the young peasant above.

[162](2) Population figures for Maiduguri are as follows (see Coleman, J.S., op. cit. p. 74):

1921	1931	1953
16,274	24,359	54,646

Government service personnel in Bornu estimated the population of Maiduguri at 75,000 to 80,000 during the period 1956/57.

443 Magumeri for the Sunday market. Kachella feels that these people are his
366 friends. On the other hand, although Kachella's market friends to the
572 north are known to and known by his market friends to the south, they are not "friends" to one another. Again, the friends to the south have their own friends farther south at markets which Kachella rarely visits. Thus market cycles are overlapping, interlocking networks of social and economic relations which vary for each market town.

443 Beside the interlocking cycle of local markets, each town
366 and/or cycle has some kind of link with a larger center of the export-
439 import trade, the two largest being Maiduguri in the south, and Nguru
[437] (the rail head) in the extreme northwest of the Emirate. Traditionally trading caravans set out from Maiduguri once every two weeks for remote market towns. Although less important today, these can still be
[494] seen. If there are roads, lorries bring people and goods from the larger centres early on market day and return at night or the next day with rural purchasers and travellers returning to or visiting the large urban centre.

443 One of the chief features resulting from this system of
366 distribution is that markets on motor roads assume primary importance
494 while those back in the bush are becoming secondary, and are less well attended. However, the interlocking nature of the rural market cycles makes for ease of communication and distribution in the region as a whole, and this is accentuated by the direct links with the centre and the modern use of lorries as the primary means of transport.

366 The relation between market towns and population size is
494 indirect. Very few market towns in Bornu have population aggregates
161 of under one thousand, while the presence of a market and, more im-
[162] portantly, a motor road tend to stimulate population growth. Thus pop-

In Maiduguri, there 443 is an Alkali court within the confines of the market area which handles [698] all cases occurring in the market. Each category of goods or services sold has its own section and, as in town planning, the butcher section is almost always to leeward (southwest) of the market. Market fees for stalls are exacted in the larger centres such as Maiduguri and Nguru. In Magumeri, stalls seemed to be allotted on a "first come, first served" basis except that sellers always take up positions in the particular section of the market given over to their commodity or service.

In Magumeri on non-market days, there are daily stalls in various parts of the town where sundries such as kerosene, cigarettes, flashlight batteries, sugar, small quantities of meat, grain, vegetables and cooked foods can be obtained. That these supplies are limited is indicated by the shortage which obtains if some larger assemblage [123] of people are meeting in town between market days. One of the writer's [435] "followers" (tada njima) had the privilege of taking cigarettes from the former's house stores during ceremonies when town supplies were depleted and prices rose ten to fifteen per cent above normal. The cigarettes were returned in kind on market day when they could be purchased by the follower at standard prices.

• [162] In larger centres, such as Maiduguri, Geidam and Nguru, where the population is over ten thousand, the presence of larger numbers of full-time specialists necessitates that the market remain open [805] every day. However, the weekly tradition still obtains even in these places in that the day upon which the market used to be held weekly is still its most active and populous occasion, and the market is still referred to by its old weekly day name. Thus in Maiduguri, the Monday market is held every day although on Monday it still attracts many more people and goods than any other day of the week.

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

242 During 1956-7 the Agricultural Officer of Bornu Province
197 was a Kanuri who had studied tropical agriculture in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, and India. He was very enthusiastic about the introduction of citrus crops into the area, and spent a large part of his time helping to get this programme under way in the southern part of the province. He was also interested in introducing super-phosphate fertilizer into the agricultural practices of Kanuri cultivators to increase the yield of millet and groundnuts.

241 The average yields for the province using traditional techniques are approximately 600 lbs. of groundnuts (decorticated) and 400 lbs. of millet (threshed) per acre. The yields diminish as one travels north towards the desert, and farm sizes increase in proportion, although farm size is also dependent upon family size, marriage stability, and the socio-economic relations of the cultivator within the community (Cohen, 1959). Research has [242] proven that the use of super-phosphate fertilizer can raise agricultural productivity in Bornu from 25% to 40% above that normally obtained with traditional growing techniques.

Two methods of planting crops are known. The bulk of the farm plots for most cultivators are the *kulo karabe* or far farms.[1] These are located beyond a two hundred yard perimeter (approximately) around the village. Here crops are planted [221] a week or two after the first rains, hoed twice during the wet season, and harvested in the period from November to the end of December. In the *kulo fatobe* or near farms, within a two hundred yard perimeter around the village, and within the household itself, maize and vegetables are planted with compost, mostly from sheep, goats, horses, and burnt ashes. This is placed on the soil during planting, and may be applied again during the growing season. Sometimes the compost is put into the ground along with the seeds.

101 The following course of events was observed in Magumeri,
• [162] a comparatively small district capital (population 2000), forty-five miles northwest of Maiduguri, the provincial capital.

[1] Literally this expression means "bush farm," and *kulo fatobe* translated literally would be "house farm." For purposes of descriptive convenience and accuracy, the writer has coined the phrases "near" and "far" farms.